1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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The villager's diet is greatly affected by factors other than his financial condition or even his own personal likes and dislikes in food. Social pressure is a determining force.

Although the financial condition of the family does play a part in determining the differences in exact details of meals, most villagers' meals are very much alike. Rice is always preferred as the center or focus of each meal. Various items such as dried fish and some steamed, dried, or fresh vegetables may be added to the rice. Pickled items may also be included for variety and flavor.

Many village families, however, because of poverty or, sometimes, for reasons of thrift, substitute sweet potatoes for rice. If fresh, the sweet potatoes are steamed; otherwise, shredded dry sweet potatoes will usually be steamed together with the rice with which they are mixed. Sweet potatoes are much less expensive than rice, since they are grown on the less desirable nonirrigated dry land. Generally speaking, the villagers do not like sweet potatoes, and the adults complain that when children eat sweet potatoes they soon become hungry again and that they have stomach pains. On the other hand, rice is universally enjoyed and is held to be satisfactorily filling.

FOOD AND RITUAL ENTERTAINMENT

The villagers' best opportunities for good eating as well as entertainment come mainly on religious, magical, and other occasions which are usually marked by festivity. These festive occasions are fairly frequent and have widely diverse origins; the religion of the villagers is Taoist, with an admixture of Buddhist and animistic beliefs and, of course, ancestor worship. In addition, the people frequently take part in magical rituals requiring the offices of shamans and various forms of divination in the case of illness, when demons are thought to be involved. Ample food of relatively high quality is served at almost all of these frequently performed religious and magical rituals, especially when outside guests are present. The amounts and kinds of food vary with the occasion. At one of the ordinary *pai-pai* (any ritual in which food or other items are sacrificed to gods or ancestors), which in the Hsin Hsing village area occur at least four times a month and at which there are usually no guests, the additional food may be some cooked pork or fresh fish and soup. This food is used for the ceremonial sacrifices and eaten later. There are elaborate food preparations for larger *pai-pai* dinners such as those for the village god, or at marriage festivals to which outside guests are always invited, or to a lesser degree at dinners for laborers at harvesttime. Sometimes at weddings, funerals, or other such occasions there are as many as eighteen

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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hsiang Public Office and obtain permission to bury the body in the public cemetery. (Burial in private fields has not been permitted since early in the Japanese period.)

Relatives, including *ch'in tsu*, married daughters, and *ch'in ch'i*, are notified of the death and asked to come to the home of the deceased. Relatives in distant places are notified by means of telegram, special-delivery express letter, or telephone. If their relationship to the deceased was a close one, they too are asked to come to the village. Relatives who live nearby are usually notified of the death by messengers, such as a younger member of the deceased's family or some *ch'in tsu*, friend, or neighbor.

While they are still on the road approaching the village relatives begin to wail, and as they enter the village they fall to their knees and crawl to the house and into the room where the body lies. Someone who was present at the time of the death may crawl out to meet and welcome these relatives and then crawl into the room with them. *Ch'in tsu* relatives and married daughters are expected to wail and crawl both to show their respect for the deceased and to express their sorrow for not being present at the death. The villagers consider it unfilial to be absent when a parent or *ch'in tsu* relative who is older or of a higher generation dies. Many villagers look on and may criticize the arrivals for not wailing loud enough or for not getting down on their hands and knees to crawl soon enough. One may also hear old village women note how filial someone is because of the distance she crawls or the way she wails.

Preparation for the Funeral and Burial

Immediately after the death, arrangements are made for five *tao shih* to come to the village from Lukang to officiate at the funeral. A village funeral may be delayed because the *tao shih* are participating in a funeral elsewhere and are not available immediately. Usually, five *tao shih* form a group and work together with a small orchestra of three or four men who normally accompany them to the ceremony. The group of about eight men usually charges approximately NT $580 (US $10.50).

It is very rare that a Buddhist funeral is held in Hin Hsing or other villages of the area. While most of the villagers worship Buddha and Kuan Yin along with the Taoist hierarchy of gods, they are not Buddhists, and the one such funeral held in recent years was for the old mother of the largest landlord family in the village. This woman was a Buddhist, and while she was still alive had Buddhist nuns come to the village to pray for her.

Virtually all village families willingly assist in the funeral preparations. Most village families are members of one of several "Father-

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Religion and Magic in Hsin Hsing Village

The importance of religion in Chinese life has long been underestimated by many Chinese and Western scholars. This underestimation is due in large part to the apparent lack of a formally organized religious system characterized by sacred and pious activities. In truth, though, a very structured system of religious (and magical) belief does exist and is functionally important in the life of the people.

In the Hsin Hsing area (and apparently in most of rural Taiwan) this system is characterized by a strong belief in a supernatural or spiritual community which is composed of the spirits of natural objects, the spirits of ancestors and deified heroes, and evil spirits or demons, all of them able to influence or affect the lives of the villagers. The system functions to merge these entities "into a harmonious whole. The individual person not only has to fit himself into customs and institutions of the living but must adjust himself to the needs of the members of the spiritual community in order to remain *en rapport* with them so as to win the happiness he longs for" (Kulp, 1925:284).

We have already seen something of how the material and spiritual communities are functionally integrated in various aspects of life in the Hsin Hsing area. We saw, for example, how the religious family and its associated religious rites function to buttress the precarious solidarity of the families and *tru* groups through their periodic divisions, and how the various rites of passage, marking off the transitional phases of the villager's life cycle, help to reaffirm his identity within the family, its extensions, and the community. In this chapter, we will observe the religious and magical practices common to the area: the frequency of the supernatural rituals and the extent to which they pervade and influence village life, and the degree to which some have been modified in participation or performance or in the significance the villagers attach to them as a result of changes in other aspects of the society, especially in socioeconomic developments.

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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We will also see that although some religious or magical act is performed in the village almost every day of the week, either by a family or by the village as a whole, this is not necessarily an indication of piety and veneration as the West understands religion. For the Taiwanese villager, the observances are not necessarily sacred only; many villagers have pointed out that they "make life interesting and exciting, and the people look forward to them with great enthusiasm." Not only do such activities have a significant function in Taiwanese society but, as we shall see, many villagers are extremely aware of the importance of many rituals to the continuity of their society and patterns of living.

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF SUPERNATURAL BELIEFS AND ACTIVITIES

The villagers' practices are not based on a strong belief in any single concept of the supernatural. There is, in fact, so complete a mixture of religious and magical beliefs in the village that it is often difficult to determine where one form ends and another begins. While elements of popular Taoism and ancestor worship are the strongest and most apparent, there is a clearly Buddhist influence, and the moral and ethical teachings of Confucianism are extremely evident. There are also important elements of animism out of which has "grown a complex of attitudes and values" (Kulp, 1925:284) and a system of divination by which the "spirits of wind and water" (Kulp, 1925:284) may be controlled; this is referred to as geomancy (*feng-shui*).

The funeral ceremony (described in Chapter 7) clearly shows the presence of this admixture in the villagers' beliefs. There are elements of Taoism and Buddhism in the ritual of the journey of the spirit of the dead to the underworld for final judgment, punishment, and rebirth in the next world, but there are also evident Confucian teachings and even remnants of animistic beliefs. It is perhaps most accurate to say that all these beliefs have been combined into a single loose system, and the average believer makes no attempt to define or distinguish the different elements of the whole.

Confucianism

While Confucianism is closely integrated within the religious system, there is no formal cult or official Confucian ritual in Hsin Hsing village. Although there is a Confucian temple in Lukang, usually only residents of that city worship there.[1] However, the moral and ethical teachings of Confucianism are present in the rules of correct behavior which have been passed down from generation to generation of villagers. Filial piety, respect for age and authority, and worship of

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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the ancestors are all considered both important and fundamental to correct behavior. Aptly expressing a rather general feeling, one villager said, "Everyone knows it's natural to act this way. What other way is there to act?"

The development of this attitude is promoted chiefly by examples in everyday life which are a part of a child's general upbringing. Children are frequently told stories which emphasize the rewards of filial and virtuous behavior. The scrolls displayed and the stories told by the *tao shih* during funerals (see Chapter 7) contribute greatly to the indoctrination. In addition, the use of formal kinship terminology constantly reminds children of the importance of proper behavior towards their superiors or elders. Terms of respect (utilizing kinship terminology) which take into account the relative age and generation of all relatives and even friends and neighbors are learned early and indicate the way one person is expected to act toward another.

Children and adults are also constantly reminded of the "moral way" by door hangings whose elaborate calligraphy exhorts them to proper behavior as well as wishing them good fortune. While most villagers cannot actually read the characters, they know what they mean. These scrolls are usually purchased in Lukang; nowadays many of them bear anti-Communist, nationalistic slogans which mean little to most of the villagers who buy them.

The schools consistently emphasize many of the basic traditional moral values. Textbooks present stories about acts of filial piety or respect for elders and those in authority and emphasize the value of reasonableness, compromise, and cooperation, and, of course, patriotism and even extreme nationalism. In addition, special topics or themes are stressed during certain weeks. For example, the schools observe "filial piety week," during which they stress obedience and respect for age, teachers, and parents. Other weeks are devoted to the importance of love and charity, respect for country, and the national flag. Thus, we find the moral and ethical teachings of Confucianism constantly reaffirmed in everyday life.

Ancestor Worship

Ancestor worship, which is closely related to Confucianism and the mystique of filial piety, and whose rituals actually reinforce it, is a form of religious belief to which virtually all Hsin Hsing area villagers adhere. The believers are not, however, in agreement about the effect ancestors have on the lives of their descendants. Many in Hsin Hsing do not agree that ancestors provide positive aid to their descendants, but few would deny the misfortunes that are sure to fall if neglected ancestors vengefully fail to protect their unfilial descendants from the many negative spirits.

Since ancestral spirits live in the other world much as they did in

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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affairs, the cause of their troubles is often laid to a relative who left no descendants to care for his spirit. It then becomes necessary for the family to placate the spirit by adopting a child as his official descendant and worshipper. All such adoptions are eventually recorded on the ancestral tablet. The name of the adopted child is engraved next to the name of the deceased, along with a note stating that he was adopted for the purpose of continuing the line (*ch'eng szu*).

Buddhism

In the Hsin Hsing village area, Buddhism, at least as an independent religious system, is of negligible importance. While there are visible elements of Buddhism such as the scroll bearing the image of the goddess Kuan Yin, it is difficult to distinguish features of Buddhist ritual from Taoist features. Women take the most active part in all forms of Buddhist worship, and once each year they worship at scattered temples located in the *hsien*. In spite of the mixture of religious images in Buddhist temples, the Buddhist rites are distinctly identified as such.

Popular Taoism

Of the various religious practices discussed thus far, popular Taoism may be said to occupy the most time and attention of the Hsin Hsing villagers. Popular Taoism is a debased derivative of Lao-tze's "Way" and centers around a hierarchy of gods infiltrated by many diverse supernatural beings or forces. Belief in these supernatural entities is derived from the Yin-Yang principle, the concept of the universe as the sum of the infinity of all the positive and negative forces that comprise it. In popular Taoism, the positive and negative forces have become personified; thus, it is not only necessary to have priests (*tao shih*) but shamans (*fa shih* and *t'iao t'ung*) too are needed to conduct religious ceremonies to worship the gods and to perform magical rites to propitiate the evil supernatural beings who might otherwise harm the believers.

The hierarchy of gods in popular Taoism is ranked in order from the highest T'ien Kung, the heavenly God (also referred to by the villagers as Yu Ti, the Jade Emperor), down through others of lesser importance, to an assortment of village gods and private, individual gods at the bottom of the hierarchy. Many are historic personages of the early dynasties, particularly the Sung and T'ang, who have been deified for their remarkable deeds. Their feats are well known, although the stories of some apparently have mythical backgrounds.

The villagers consider the hierarchy of gods to be fashioned on the order of the imperial court of traditional China. They are thus, as described by one of the better educated older villagers, "what would

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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be the equivalent of an emperor, ministers, marshalls, and generals. In this hierarchy T'ien Kung is the emperor. Right under T'ien Kung are the three brother gods, San Chieh Kung: (1) T'ien Kuan, the god of heaven; (2) Ti Kuan, the god of earth; and (3) Shui Kuan, the god of water." In addition, the gods which reign in the underworld are regarded as high and powerful gods.

After these there is a whole lesser series which inhabit local areas such as villages. Some of these lesser gods have specific functions in which can be seen the mixture of magic in religion, for example, providing aid to the villagers when they are faced with illness in the family or fire in a house. Others help when general misfortune befalls the village or an individual family. (These will be discussed in detail below.) The lesser gods also function as intermediaries or "ambassadors" between ordinary people and the higher gods, since mere mortals cannot take their prayers or wishes directly to the highest gods but must transmit their prayers through these lesser gods, just as they must employ certain priests or shamans in order to communicate with the lesser gods; this was seen in the premarriage ritual described in Chapter 7, when a *t'iao t'ung* performed in this way.

The parallel between the system of gods and that of imperial China is heightened by the attribution to the gods of their own armies of soldiers and horses. Each god's importance and power, of course, determines the size of the army he possesses. Since the soldiers and horses protect the gods and carry out their work, sacrifices offered to a god must include food for his soldiers and hay and water for the horses.

> The villagers [noted one informant] believe that the gods within the hierarchy, much like ancestors, do not punish people when they do not worship. Instead the gods' action is positive, since if the people do worship the gods, they will protect the people and help make their lives run smoothly. If they do not worship, the gods will neither bother them nor help them. This is equivalent to giving them trouble since the people believe that without the gods they will have trouble in life and nothing will run smoothly. The gods are not considered possible sources of doing bad since they are holy men (*sheng jen*) and therefore won't hurt the people. People do not think of the forces of nature as good or bad. They only know from experience that life is hard and that they need the gods to help make things run a little more smoothly. Therefore, worshipping the gods is traditional, and so long as life is difficult, people will grow up generation after generation worshipping the gods in the same way.

For these reasons, the villagers worship the gods not only when they desire aid but also on the gods' birthdays and other special occasions.

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Statues of the gods are usually carved by master craftsmen in Lukang, a well-known center for such work in Taiwan. They may be owned by individual families, by a *tsu*, or jointly by the entire village

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791 597 622 K'ang family, which immediately consulted him. In the course of reading the family's fortune he conveniently found that portents for the future were unfavorable but could be positively influenced if one daugher were given up for adoption. This course was adopted and quickly acted upon. There was now little fear of village criticism, since the action was clearly necessary to preserve the family's good fortune.

SUPERNATURAL RITUALISM

• 791 789 All religion exists to provide at least an illusion of protective control against the uncertainties of nature. Although efforts to draw a clear line between religion and magic are usually not successful, certain differences can be pointed out. Generally, religion has some ethical or moral content, while magic contents itself with a more limited scope. Religion functions to preserve a concept of the universe in which man can survive (almost always including after death) so long as he obeys the rules; and the rules are those which his religion teaches him. Depending on the complexity of his particular religion, his priests may or may not be able to intercede directly for him with the mighty supernatural beings who are his gods.

Magic, on the other hand, does not usually have a strong ethical content; generally, it is completely pragmatic. In its concepts, supernatural forces or beings exist; they may be relatively indifferent to man or may be beneficent or malevolent. The essential thing about all of them is that they are subject to certain controls which can be wielded by man (often by specially gifted individuals only). As Malinowski (1948) has often pointed out, the art of magic is the manipulation and coercion of impersonal supernatural powers in order automatically to bring about a definite and desired end. In the Hsin Hsing village area, although it may be at times difficult to draw a clear line of distinction between religious and magical rituals, both types are nevertheless identifiable.

796 As to clearly religious rituals, I found that Hsin Hsing area villagers usually draw a distinction according to the cyclic or noncyclic nature of the religious rite. The normally expectable events like birth, marriage, death, and some other such "rites of passage" or "crisis rites" which are noncyclic have already been discussed in Chapter 7. I will now discuss the fixed, recurrent group rites, usually referred to in the literature as "rites of intensification."

Cyclic Rites

The villagers' calendrical schedule of *pai-pai* contains only rites associated with formal religious holidays. However, there are other cyclic rites whose time schedules are determined strictly by the individual family or *tsu* group; though cyclical, they fall into another

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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shaman's magic. The awe and shock which he inspires in the patient could have actual therapeutic value, at least to the extent of bringing about temporary relief if not recovery, and may not be too dissimilar to the effect of electric shock. And fear of the "shock treatment," in either case, may provide as beneficial a result as actual recourse to the treatment.

A social function of ritual, and especially of shamanistic types of ritual, might be briefly considered here. This is its "entertainment" value in rural areas. Frequently, large numbers of people turn out to witness curing or fire rituals, which may last long into the night. They almost always regard the shaman's performance as an exciting event. Many attempt to become participants, and some in their enthusiasm and excitement may even become possessed. Most participate by merely presenting sacrifices. Frequently, large crowds come from surrounding villages to watch the often "amazing feats" carried out in the course of some shamanistic rites. In this process of drawing together for an exciting ritual event, the people gain a strong—if temporary—feeling of social cohesion. Even later, the rituals give the villagers an interesting topic to discuss and gossip about for many days. Thus, although there is little formal entertainment in rural Taiwan, the ritual act often serves to fill its place.

Even though these rituals are performed by so many villagers, it does not particularly indicate absolute faith in the supernatural. While a great number of old people still hold these beliefs without reservations, today most of the villagers express some degree of uncertainty. Generally, villagers say that "many *t'iao t'ung* are not as powerful as they used to be, and also there are some who are probably fakes, but who can really tell?" (This is a point frequently made in the past by the Japanese when they ruled Taiwan and again today by the present government through the school system.) In addition, the villagers ask, "Who can really know if the *t'iao t'ung* is possessed by a god and speaking the god's words?" But all the villagers "know from experience that life is hard," and they constantly seek ways to temper this harshness. Although their faith may not be absolute, they "would not dare merely to sit and do nothing" when a sick member of the family showed no improvement, or a child neither ate nor slept for days, or a fire destroyed someone's house. They are anxious, and their continued recourse to magical or religious rituals represents their attempt to do everything possible to allay their apprehension of the unknown.

Thus, even the most skeptical of the villagers will call on a shaman in an emergency. Though the importance of Western medicine has reduced the old primary reliance on ritual curing, social pressure as well as the desire to do everything possible if one method fails forces

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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there may be certain devisive influences (usually along family or *tzu* lines), many Hsin Hsing villagers realize that the *pai-pai*, and to a lesser extent the magical ritual, are the main occasions for show of cooperation and unity within and between families and *tzu* groups in the village. Many independent, kin-related economic family units, which are more than ever before assuming greater economic independence, still come together for ancestor worship. Also, the whole village acts as a single unit when preparations are made for worship at large village *pai-pai* or a few shamanistic rites. Such widespread cooperation among the villagers of Hsin Hsing, and apparently among those in the other villages of the area, is not at all common on day-to-day occasions.

These *pai-pai*, as we have seen, also provide an opportunity for the extension of relationships beyond the boundaries of the village itself. Except for the occasional marriage, funeral, or boy's sixteenth-birthday celebration, the large *pai-pai* ceremonials are the only chances the villagers have to invite outside guests formally and to be invited in turn. Since all of these occasions stimulate reciprocal invitations and visiting, they therefore tend to facilitate contact and thus closer ties with *ch'in ch'i* in other places, which seems to be more and more emphasized in recent years. As we have already seen, the Matsu procession and *pai-pai* tends to foster cooperation and closer relations across village lines.

Even Christian families living in other villages in the area serve a large dinner and invite guests when their village holds an elaborate *pai-pai*. Although they themselves do not worship, these Christians realize that they have few opportunities to have guests and receive return invitations from relatives and friends. On such occasions they also feel obliged to do as the others do in order to avoid the laughter and criticism of their neighbors. People would say that they are either "too tight to spend the money" or perhaps just too poor. Such criticism tends to lower the reputation and general status of the family, and thus even Christians, on occasion, succumb to community pressures.

Religious and magical rituals in the Hsin Hsing area seem in general to be holding their own in face of the socioeconomic changes we have noted—changes brought about by increased economic security, higher standards of living and health, improved communications, and increased mobility. It is clear, though, that some practices of religion and magic have been weakened both in intensity and frequency. For example, many curative magical practices have been supplanted by Western medical practices as a primary means of curing. The significance attached to religious holidays such as the New Year and even some ancestral-worship ceremonies has actually de-

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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creased as urbanization and mobility to and from the city have affected village life; the urban-based villagers less frequently find it necessary or particularly desirable to return home for these occasions.

This is far from indicating, however, that all religious and magical practice is on the wane. While the traditional significance attached to some rituals has lessened, that of others has remained the same, and some have even, perhaps, increased in popularity. For example, the large shamanistic (sometimes almost orgiastic) rituals, and certain religious calendrical rituals such as the village god's birthday *pai-pai*, that draw the active participation of virtually the entire village population show no signs of weakening. Their continued and possibly even increased popularity, in fact, seems to go hand in hand with other changes in the society, including the growing influence of city life on the villagers. The same urban-dwelling villagers who can hardly be bothered to return for the more sedate New Year and ancestral-worship rituals continue to pay attention to these more dynamic rituals, as do villagers who have developed important urban ties by past residence or prolonged visits to the city. Perhaps these rites better satisfy the intensified need for excitement and entertainment stimulated by urban experiences.

But there are also other reasons for the continued importance of ritual activities in the life of the village. While the villagers are naturally unaware of the more subtle functions of ritual discussed earlier, they do recognize the part rituals can play in strengthening moral attitudes like filial piety and concepts like community cooperation. The *tao shih* priests, as we saw for example in Chapter 7, are quite open and willing at the least enquiry to tell people of the funeral ritual's multiple purposes, including those of reinforcing the moral system and relieving the anxiety which accompanies both life and death.

Other forms of religious and magical rituals serve to furnish a framework for unity and cooperation in village life whose economic and social bases have been deteriorating. The gradual breakdown of some traditional patterns, formerly based on village community life and socioeconomic necessity, has left an urgent need for some firm means to instill a sense of cohesion in the people who remain in a geographic unit. For this purpose even ancestor worship continues to play its integrative role at the family or *tsu* level.

Thus, with all the socioeconomic developments, despite some changes in form and emphasis, ritual generally is still a vital means of maintaining some semblance of communal life, even if these integrative ritual occasions are manifest only intermittently. It therefore seems reasonable to expect the performance of ritual to continue to have real importance in the lives of Hsin Hsing area villagers, although changes in emphasis are also likely to continue to occur.

many respects remained surprisingly unchanged. Brides today wear white western style wedding dresses, but otherwise the ritual of the nuptial ceremonies is much the same as it was at the turn of the century. The head of one household destroyed his ancestral tablets several years ago in a fit of anger, the ancestors having "let his mother and his wife die," but with this one exception every family in the village continues to make regular sacrifices to the deceased. Western medicine and relatively modern medical facilities are readily available, and yet two men are able to make a living in the Hsulin area as shamans. Many of the young village men wear their hair long in imitation of the Japanese imitation of Elvis Presley, but they are still willing to serve as bearers every year when the god Shang Ti Kung is carried in a heavy sedan chair across a bed of hot coals. Nor are these simply empty observances carried on out of the inertia of the young and nostalgia of the old. Particularly in respect to religion, the traditional life of the village displays real vitality. As late as 1925 a group of villagers established a new committee to organize worship for the god Tai Tzu Yeh, and in the year immediately before the war the people of Chichou contributed both time and money to rebuild the Shang Ti Kung temple. Even as late as 1960 it was possible for the committee in charge of the temple to collect several thousand dollars to hire two Taoist nuns to care for the building.

In one very important respect, however, there has been a real and irreversible change in the life of Hsiachichou, a change which has begun to have a substantial effect upon marriage forms and family life.

their sons and grandsons." Without exception, every instance of an ancestor's "coming to ask for something," a euphemism for misfortunes attributed to an ancestor, was explained to us in terms of the person's having neglected some duty to his family, not to society at large.

In return for the support of their living descendants the ancestors are expected to look after the general welfare of the family and to do their best to fulfill the specific requests of the living. When his ancestors fail in these duties, the average villager is angry and indignant, just as the ancestors are angry when he fails in his duty toward them. When his wife became ill a villager by the name of Lim Bi-kok appealed to his ancestors for help, and on their advice removed and rebuilt his stove at considerable expense. Unfortunately, his wife died. Worse yet, a few months later Lim Bi-kok's mother became ill, and again he appealed to his ancestors and again with lack of success. His mother also died. This flagrant failure on the part of his ancestors made Lim Bi-kok so angry that he took the family tablets down to the river, chopped them into little pieces, burned the pieces and threw the ashes into the river, proclaiming himself a Christian. Lim Bi-kok does not deny that there is some sense in which his ancestors exist; he only feels that "there is no use in making sacrifices to such useless people." Since this episode, Lim Bi-kok has become a relatively wealthy man, and his prosperity is often cited by the village skeptics as evidence of the impotency of the ancestors, but ancestor worship is not so frail a doctrine as to be overthrown by one such example. Although it has now been fourteen or

3: Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
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would a son. In some cases the man who makes this kind of marriage even changes his surname to that of his wife. If he doesn't, at least one of his children, usually the first born, bears the wife's surname to provide her family with genealogical descendants who will maintain their graves and carry out ancestral rites.

Lim Hue-lieng had two sons who out of family pride alone would fulfill these duties to him. Lim So-lan, however, had little or no status in his family and without a son-in-law who was obliged to support her, she might very well suffer after his death. And, what was to become of her after her own death if she had no one to provide for her in the other world with offerings from this one? Even if Lim Hue-lieng rejected, as do many young people of the present generation, the literal belief in the life of souls after physical death, he was pained by the incompleteness, the transitoriness, of his second family and wished to provide for it a future, a future which for a Taiwanese exists only in having descendants. His relationship with his sons by Lim A-pou was not close and, at best, formal. That he should wish to give permanence to his second family with whom his emotions and personal loyalties rested is not surprising. Moreover, he was excessively fond of Gioq-ki and he hated the thought of her leaving home.

All of Lim Hue-lieng's objections might have been overcome in one way or another had it not been for the origin of his daughter's suitor, Chang Jong-kuei. Even after fifty years under Japanese colonial administration, the Taiwanese viewed the restoration of their island to the Chinese government as a liberation. Their expectations were not fulfilled. Because of several tragic events followed by innumerable misunderstandings, there exists on Taiwan an attitude of scorn and distrust between the Chinese native to the island and those who came after the establishment of the Communist regime on mainland China. It is not my place here to evaluate either side but simply to point out that Lim Hue-lieng's reaction to having a mainlander as a son-in-law was in no way unusual. When his eldest son heard of the alliance proposed by his half-sister, he was as angry as his father at the shame the girl was bringing to their family. Only the intervention of some wiser friends prevented him from solving the problem in a way that his father might have used at his age, a gathering of *lo mua* friends. A half-brother's anger, however, is of a different sort than a father's. Gioq-ki's father was both angry and hurt. Lim So-lan told me, "Gioq-ki wouldn't pay any attention to her father. He tried every-

3:Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
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instead of turning to the dubious activities of the lo *mua*, they are violent only in defending the good name of their district and chastising in dark alleys any luckless mainland soldiers who force their attentions on "good" Taiwanese girls. Currently, their main activity seems to center on finding places to dance and people to dance with, an illegal activity during this period. Masa is much sought after as a dancing teacher and is reputed to be "the best." He is a romantically handsome boy with a surprising wave in his thick hair, but he does not look like a Lim. He has the charm, the temper, and the leadership potential typical of the rest of the Lims, but he is the only child of Lim Hue-lieng who has no physical resemblance to him. He has instead the short, square, powerful body of his mother, a rounder face and the broad Taiwanese nose.

I neglected to ask the family why he was known by a Japanese nickname, but regardless of the reason the name is appropriate. The image of Japan held by the younger people in the village is a composite of Japanese popular songs, colorful Japanese movies, and soft drink advertisements picturing pretty Japanese girls with friendly smiles. Masa is one of many village boys who cherish this image as an alternative to the life they know in Peihotien. As the men of his grandfather's generation chaffed under the restrictions of a Japanese colonial government and longed for the return of a Chinese administration that they could not remember, so the young men of today look upon a past they were too young to know, as a time of freedom and plenty. They read the second rate Japanese novels that are banned on Taiwan, and wear with excessive arrogance the humble Japanese *zori* that the Chinese government foolishly attempted to ban (and has since started manufacturing themselves). Nearly all of these young people have stop-gap jobs of one sort or another which bring them a little spending money but nothing that suggests a beginning in adult life. They simply wait, passing the time as pleasantly as they can. Masa and several others his age participate in the village band that marches in all religious processions, but the religion itself they scorn. Few Taiwanese take religion with the earnest seriousness that Westerners demand, but the young men of Masa's group (and that does not include all the young people of the village) laugh at the shamans, regard the priests in the temples as cynical men who have found a soft job, and ancestor worship as a tradition that must be carried on only for the pleasure it gives the old people in the family.

3: Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
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On the day I watched the annual fire-walking—an awesome ceremony in which barefoot men in a state of possession carry the images of the gods across a bed of hot coals—I saw Masa stop for a moment on his way to Tapu to look at the proceedings. I asked him later if he thought the gods had really entered the bearers' bodies and if not, why they acted so strangely. He laughed at me and at the whole affair and said the men looked to him like they were dancing "rock and roll"—for all he knew, they were practicing their dance steps.

Instead of remonstrating with Masa over the rather frivolous life he leads, A-pou and A-bok feel very sorry for him. Although A-bok has some understanding of his uncle's problems, his mother does not, and she assumes that if his uncle wanted, he could find a good paying job for Masa that would provide him with the kind of future he desires. Neither his mother nor his brother make any attempt to interest Masa in farming or confess to any hope that he will stay in the village. They act as if he had no responsibility to the family and is indeed only their pampered guest. His life and his grandfather's overlapped too briefly for the old man to leave his stamp. Masa resents his uncle's management of the family, but instead of urging his brother to divide the household, he rejects the whole system. The struggle within the family is to him but one more indication of what is wrong with the old ways.

4:Barnett E-4.5 (1965-1967) 1970 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
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CHAPTER VII

RELIGION

121 The significance of religion in Chinese social life
• 771 has often been undervalued in the conventional analyses. In one of the first assignments in my formal university study of China, a noted sinologist had written:

> The Chinese have been less concerned with the world of the supernatural than with the worlds of nature and of man. They are not a people for whom religious ideas and activities constitute an all-important and absorbing part of life . . . (Bodde, 1951:18).

Reischauer and Fairbank, in a classic work (1960:30), add that Confucianism was a "great ethical institution, which in a sense occupied in China much of the place filled by both law and religion in the West . . ." A similar thread of the insignificance of religion is woven throughout the accounts of Western scholars and is even more strongly a part of the literature of modern Chinese intellectuals (C. K. Yang, 1961:4).

The attitudes towards religion and the observances of religious rites and rituals found in Sanlei Ts'un would not support the above positions. I do not believe that Sanlei Ts'un is unique in its strong emphasis on religion as compared with other Chinese villages, i.e., I believe

121 most Chinese villages have a strong emphasis on religion.
• 771 I discuss below four primary reasons for this discrepancy between published accounts of its non-importance and the actual practice.

The first reason is identical to one contributing to the errors in interpretation of the role of women, the problem focus of this dissertation. In accordance with the concepts of Redfield (1956), every civilization has a "Great Tradition" found predominantly among the educated elite which is contrasted with a "Little Tradition" or series of "Little Traditions" found among the masses. The relationships between the two levels are problematical although almost all of the classical literature and historical records in China are devoted to the bearers of the "Great Tradition." In other terms, this has been succinctly stated by Reischauer and Fairbank:

> The common people who formed the mass of Chinese society did not bulk large in the cultural record, which has come down to us chiefly from the brushes of scholar-officials. Most Chinese were neither scholars nor Confucian gentlemen, and had very little, if anything, to do with officialdom. For the common people, Taoism and Buddhism still supplied the principle explanations of the cosmos and the family and village still were the focus of everyday living. But it is not yet possible to reconstruct with verisimilitude the daily life of the average Chinese villager in the pre-modern centuries. What we know most about is the educated, urban upper classes . . . (1960:383).

In respect to the practice of religion, it appears there is a significant difference between the elite and the masses. At least, even on Taiwan today, great differences

4:Barnett E-4,5 (1965-1967) 1970 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
Sanlei Ts'un

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can be found between the religion of the masses, particularly in rural areas, and that of college-educated urban dwellers.

A second reason is due to a great difference in the structure of the typical Western as opposed to Chinese religion. C. K. Yang has discussed this difference on a structural-functional basis as the differences between "institutionalized" and "diffused" religion:

> In institutional religion, the theology, the organization of personnel, and the cultic symbols and practices are separate from the secular social institutions, thus making religion an independent social institution. In diffused religion, these factors have no separate institutional existence but are diffused into the concept and structure of several different institutions. In Nanching and in Chinese society as a whole, diffused religion represented the structurally stronger and more pervasive force in the lives of the common people (1965:192-3).

Western religion tends to be highly institutionalized as opposed to the strongly diffused Chinese pattern. An institutionalized religion is much more obvious to the cross-cultural observer. It will be demonstrated that religion in Sanlei Ts'un is diffused into many different aspects of social life as has been described in most ethnographic accounts of Chinese villages.

The third reason, also related to the difficulty of the Westerner in understanding Chinese religion and appraising its role in society, is due to the eclectic nature of religion in China. Eclecticism refers to the fact that Chinese religion is made up of elements from many

121 different sources including both Great and Little Tradi-
• 791 tions and also, that the Chinese are non-exclusive with reference to a commitment to a particular religion. It is not only possible to believe in two conflicting ideologies, it may well be prudent as I shall illustrate.[1] When exposed to a new religion, an individual may ask two central questions: (1) Is it the one true religion? (2) Should I become a believer? Man can never be certain of the answer to the first question but he does have control over his actions relating to the second. If the answer to the first question is no (the new religion is false), then the answer to the second is irrelevant (believing or not believing). However, if the answer to the first question is true (the new religion is the one true religion), then the answer to the second is crucial: a man can be a believer in the one true religion and be rewarded; or he can be a non-believer in the one true religion and be punished. Therefore since man has control over only one of the two questions, it is prudent to answer it in only one profitable way--be a believer.[2]

The above rational process could be applied to a series of individual beliefs or constellation of beliefs and in each case the outcome would be the same: become a believer. On several occasions, villagers asked how to be a Christian or perform Christian ritual. They had heard of Christianity and would like to add it to their belief

121 systems.
• 771

If a man were to apply the above approach to a series of beliefs, he would be required to accept and internalize some beliefs which are in direct conflict with others. This does not seem to present the problems it might require of a man socialized in terms of Western culture. That is, there does not seem to be the same strong drive for belief consistency, i.e., construction of what has been termed an integrated personality. Francis L. K. Hsu (1953; 1963) has characterized the Chinese personality as "situation-centered" by which he means that a Chinese reacts to his world as if it were compartmentalized: he possesses a segmented personality. "Principles which are correct for one set of circumstances may not be appropriate for another at all, but the principles in each case are equally honorable. In fact, the good Chinese tends to have multiple standards" (1963:2). "The individual feels no resentment against conforming and no compunction about behaving differently under contrasting sets of circumstances" (1963:2). This great difference in approach has seemingly confused Western scholars.

A man who repeatedly offers one opinion, then changes it to the opposite side and then again reverts to the original position is labeled "insincere" according to
121 771 775 181 156 Western principles. Liao P'o-li, the forty-two year old son of the man who headed the largest extended family in

121 Sanlei, told me on many different occasions that he did
• 771 not believe in ghosts or evil spirits. Nevertheless, I
795 saw him make sacrifices of propitiation to ghosts and evil
181 spirits and after an accidental death in Erhlei, he refused
156 to come alone to my house to chat as long as he had to pass the body which was laid out in the courtyard. He said he was afraid of the evil spirits which were sure to be lurking near the body. When I argued that he claimed he did not believe in spirits and ghosts, he told me not to be foolish and he would not come until the body was buried. Liao P'o-li was a sincere man who did not believe in spirits in one set of circumstances but did believe in spirits in another. He will continue to oscillate between
121 these positions as situations change. I believe the West-
771 ern scholar is incorrect if he labels China irreligious on the basis of this process. Even though an informant may tell him, "We do not really believe these religious things," the researcher should observe his activities and apply a behavioral yardstick to accurately assess the informant's attitudes.

The fourth and final reason is due to a Western distinction between religion on the one hand and magic or superstition on the other. Gallin points out (1966:232) there is "so complete a mixture of religious and magical belief [in the village he studied] that it is often difficult to determine where one form ends and another begins"

121 but such an objective approach has not always been realized.
• 771 Many of the earliest Western studies were by Christian missionaries, a group not likely to be unbiased with regard to reports on religion. In one of the best known nineteenth century rural studies, Arthur Smith (1899:343) argued that the Chinese neglected the spiritual nature. Modern sinologists treat magic and religion as a single loose system (Gallin, 1966:232) or a complex of attitudes and beliefs (Kulp, 1952:284). The former separation of magic from religion and then labeling most items as magic and thereby superstition is not reasonable as a basis for declaring that religion is not important in China. C. K. Yang claims that because of the large numbers of magical practices and beliefs to be found in the study of Chinese religion which carry no ethical connotations:

> . . . The Chinese people were generally regarded as a superstitious lot who had yet to experience an ethico-religious life of a higher order. This view was most familiar to the Western world, as it was popularized for over a century by Western missionaries who found this situation to be wholly incompatible with the Christian faith and took it as the most convincing justification for their evangelical zeal (1961:3).

In this chapter, I will demonstrate that religion is very important in Sanlei village. There are few households in the village in which a religious act is not performed at least twice each day. Religion is used to bolster the family and the larger kinship organizations. Religious observances legitimize and mark key steps in the

121 life cycle. Religion supports the previously described
971 sworn brothers and god's associations. The village temple and major religious events also support relationships with other communities. Finally, religious beliefs affect many aspects of daily life.

The Main Village Temple

346 The most important building in Sanlei Ts'un is the village temple which is ornate and well-maintained inside and out, the largest, cleanest, and most imposing structure
978 in the village. This building is the social center of the
621 village for in addition to its religious functions, it is a meeting hall, a recreation center, a study center for children, and the focal point for visitors and much community pride is derived from the prestige associated with the temple. The temple is important for the performance of religious rites but not as important as the home, at least on a quantitative basis, although the temple is considered to rank higher in the religious hierarchy than the home as a worship center. Temples are also rated hierarchically and in local opinion, the one in Erhlei is ranked higher than the one in Sanlei while both rank below a major temple
978 in Hsin Tien. The temple is usually a significant part of
[796] the major calendrical religious rites as well as many of the periodic (non-calendrical) community religious events.
[782] On a personal level, many individuals consult the temple gods as needed while other individuals may worship daily,

769 or special religious occasions, food sacrifices will vary in elaborateness according to the importance of the event. Paper money is often burned in a metal pot on the kung t'ing floor for the benefit of both gods and ancestors. Life crises events such as birth, death if not accidental, engagements, and weddings are all solemnized in the kung t'ing.

778 342 One should not believe however, that the kung t'ing is a cherished and sacred room which is always approached with reverence. It is a common room, second only to the kitchen in frequency of use. Bicycles and other valuable goods are kept in the room while pickled radishes and home-made soy sauce may be stored in crocks under the ancestral table. Children often play in the room and the ever-present chickens wander in and out leaving droppings. Since the room is frequently owned jointly by more than one household, no one person truly feels it is his responsibility to keep it clean.

771 In one sense, the room furnishes a clue to the general approach to religion found in the village; it is elaborate but not well-maintained. One performs all the proper rituals but one is skeptical about their efficacy. Everyone half-believes and half does not believe in ancestors, magic, and religion. Older people are more interested in religion than younger people and women are more interested than men although there is considerable variability related to personality in both instances.

79 village itself. Each differs in the types of powers he possesses and/or the rituals he performs while two of the same type may have different qualitative ratings. Some specialists charge a fee for services and others depend on gifts. Nothing will be said directly if the gift is too small, but the practitioner will not return the next time he is called. Everyone knows what amount constitutes a proper gift. For the most part, the community has established rather permanent relations with certain individuals who have a regular practice in the area.

791 One significant type of practice involves specialists in 823 feng shui (literally wind and water but usually 791 termed geomancy). Geomancy is related to the Yin (negative) and Yang (positive) factors and the Five Elements: water, metal, fire, earth, and wood (Burkhardt, 1953:129-33). "Geomancy deals with the supernatural relation of geographical locations to human events" (C. K. Yang, 1967b:263). Certain geographical locations have influence on human life, negative or positive. These factors are especially important with regard to the location of tombs, 791 building sites, and the kitchen stove. Almost all village 823 adults are amateur geomancers, i.e., they possess rudi- 787 mentary knowledge of significant elements. Moreover, villagers believe they can generalize from previous events. For instance, a house may be built right next door to a geomancer-directed house without professional consultation

796 The affair involved a sizeable expenditure of re-
574 sources. The temple committee collected and spent over
435 $5,500.00. The two weddings scheduled because of the cere-
[585] mony, one with eight tables (80 guests) and the other with five tables (50 guests) meant a dinner guest fee[10] alone of over $6,000.00 without the additional gifts and expenses. Sixty-one other households held elaborate dinners with feasts too for there were more guests in the village than residents. For one of the richer households, the additional expenditures on food and drink as compared with a typical day exceeded $700.00. To assess the size of this [434] figure, note that an experienced farm laborer earns but $50.00 for a full day's work. No villager seemed too unhappy about the expenditure as people claim they now "dare to spend money" (see Glossary C). The expenditures for [78] pai pai have increased in Sanlei village, a process that seems common to all of Taiwan and which reflects the overall growing prosperity.

Summary .

• 791 Religion is very important in Sanlei Ts'un. Although little importance can be attached to an organized hierarchy of religious functionaries, there are many kinds of unorgan-
782 ized specialists who are consulted as needs arise. Additionally, almost everyone in the village can and does perform religious acts regularly. There is daily worship in most homes and special worship connected with almost every important event: life crises, health, and economic.

000 important event: life crises, health, and economic. The
778 home is the central focus of worship and in all but two
[353] village homes, the most elaborate and expensive furnishings
are those connected with worship. The second most impor-
tant center is the temple which is the most elaborate and
771 expensive building in the community. Although Sanlei vil-
621 lage is highly integrated, only for religion does the com-
182 munity gather in one place to act cooperatively with any
182 degree of frequency. At the li level, the temple and
632 religion serve a similar function except that in addition
771 to religion, politics and the school also feature commun-
771 ity-wide cooperation and joint activities. Religion is
602 the unifying element, at least on a manifest basis, of
182 larger kinship organizations such as the compound and
575 lineage and such voluntary organizations as the sworn
brothers and god's associations.

771 Religious values support the dictums of social con-
626 trol. Although there are reasonably high levels of skep-
182 ticism regarding the efficacy of religious acts, no man is
truly an atheist, i.e., although many claim not to believe
that a particular act works or has power for good or evil,
almost everyone is afraid not to perform the required
ritual when it is specified as appropriate.

771 There are so many kinds of religious and magical
193 functionaries, that one can be found to recommend almost
182 any kind of desired action. This recommendation supports
79

771 183 182 79 a villager in what otherwise might be an unpopular decision or action because he can then say the gods so order it.

182 771 796 Additionally, religious events are fun and along with certain life crises events, almost the only periods of gaiety in an otherwise fairly drab existence. It appears, as suggested in Potter's conception of "The Limited Good," richer villagers do fear to practice conspicuous consumption (1965). One normally avoids coming to the attention of villagers, government officials, and gods, in order to avoid arousing feelings of jealousy, but rich food and drink is not only permitted but is strongly encouraged for holidays. It is proper to offer expensive foods to the gods and whatever is left over when the gods finish can be eaten by anyone without fear of censure. Indeed, it should be shared with guests for jealousy is not aroused when people are only eating the god's left-[554]overs. This set of beliefs permits both self-indulgence and a means for validating one's social position in the community, i.e., the richer the food, the higher the status. For guests (especially poorer ones), there is an opportunity to eat rich foods and delicacies rarely experienced.

771 805 461 182 It will be demonstrated in Chapter IX that religion also serves to regulate the divisions of time--yearly, monthly, and daily and that much of the leisure time is justified on a religious basis.

• 771 182 Finally, during periods of ultimate crises, various aspects of religion and ritual emotionally support an individual. Although medicine may fail, religion or magic may work and if neither prove effective, there is the underlying concept of fate, i.e., all had been ordained at birth. By using magic and religion, one has attempted all possible avenues towards achievement of some goal.

805 sequence is repeated. Completion of life through the entire
791 cycle is a primary factor supporting the stress on the six-
805 tieth birthday for any person who lives longer than a full cycle is considered to have been necessarily favored by the gods. This belief in god's favor applies to males and females alike. The sixty-year cycle results from the interaction between three sets of factors which are each a complex religious concept with exceedingly intricate complexities and ramifications. Although each will be discussed briefly below in turn, it must be realized that little more than a cursory examination is offered.

805 The first set is related to the Chinese view of the
812 world as if it were bipolar for not only does everything have its opposite, opposites are both necessary and complementary to each other. "These opposites tended to merge into each other and even to become each the opposite of its former self" (Thompson, 1969:3). One of these principles, yang, stands for activity, light, heat, dryness, hardness, and masculinity; the opposite, yin, for quiescence, cold, darkness, humidity, softness, and femininity (Bodde, 1951: 21).

812 The eternal interaction of the above two general
82 principles, the yin and the yang, produce the wu haing (five
805 primary elements): fire, water, earth, wood, and metal (Bodde, 1951:21-2). The Chinese word haing, which sinologues have usually translated as element, is actually a

4:Barnett E-4.5 (1965-1967) 1970 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
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562 Avalokitesvara who "hears the complaints of mankind" (Eich-
776 orn, 1964:192). Although originally male, in about the eleventh century in China, Avalokitesvara becomes a female divinity who is the embodiment of beneficence (Eichorn, 1964:192).

562 In the practice of religion, although the majority
• 771 of religious functionaries are men, there have always been a number of temples and monasteries staffed entirely by women. In Sanlei, as in most other Chinese villages, women actually perform much of the ritual activities in spite of the value which specifies that they should be performed by men, especially the required ritual. One merely has to observe celebrants in any Chinese temple a few hours to find that a majority of the worshippers tend to be women.

Some writers have claimed that Confucius and Confucian doctrines are responsible for the lack of esteem in which Chinese women are regarded and the comparatively low position they are said to have in society (Smith, 1899: 305-6; Lang, 1946:42-6; Straelen, 1936:43) but the evidence is not certain. O'Hara, for example, cites a great body of Confucian teachings supporting the opposite position (1955; 1963). For example, O'Hara cites the stories of Confucius and his relationships with women (1955:163-4) in which he acceded to their wisdom. Confucius also taught that wives and favorite concubines were responsible for ruling the inner apartments and encouraging men to behave properly (1963: 79-80).